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VOL. 64.—No. 51.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1886.

PRICE { 3d. Unstamped.
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THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC.

Our account of the history of the Guildhall School of Music, and of its Principal, Mr. Weist Hill, we must supplement by a brief description of the ceremony which inaugurated the new building on the Thames Embankment. It took place on Thursday, the 9th inst., too late for insertion in our last number. At half-past two in the afternoon the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress inspected the building, having been received by the chairman of the Music Committee of the Corporation, Mr. R. P. Taylor. This over, a procession was formed, consisting of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, preceded by the officers of the Corporation, a number of the aldermen, the members of the Music Committee, the chairmen of the various committees of the Court of Common Council, the masters of several City Companies, Sir Horace Jones (City Architect), and most of the professors of the School of Music. As the procession entered the hall of the City of London School, where the opening ceremony took place, the choir sang the National Anthem, after which Mr. Taylor addressed the Lord Mayor in a lengthy speech. This, he said, was a day of rejoicing for the Corporation of the City of London, whose anxiety at all times to do what it could, not only for the metropolis, but for the country at large, was evidenced by these proceedings. (Hear, hear.) He then gave a history of the school, tracing its foundation from the establishment of the Guildhall Orchestral Society, in January, 1879, which was taken over by the Court of Common Council in September of that year, to the present time, and detailing the various grants which had been made by the Corporation, and the scholarships and other benefactions of which the institution had been the recipient. In 1880 the school had 62 students, the number now on the register being 2,503, whilst the number of the professors employed had increased from 29 to 90. One hundred and twenty concerts had been given, at which 106,450 auditors had been present, and the amount received for fees since the school was started exceeded £80,000. (Cheers.) He concluded by requesting the Lord Mayor to declare the new buildings open. The Head Master of the City of London School (the Rev. Dr. Abbott) then offered up prayer, after which the ladies' choir sang Gounod's chorus "Sing to God," the solos being performed by Miss Emmie Hare (Corporation Exhibitioner) and Miss Annie Morley (Merchant Taylors' Exhibitioner).

The Lord Mayor, rising amid cheers, said it afforded him great pleasure to be present, and at the commencement of his year of office, to set the seal to another of the great works of which the Corporation had reason to be justly proud. (Hear, hear.) The statement which had been made by Mr. Taylor showed that the Guildhall School of Music had passed out of the range of experiment, and had become a pronounced success. It had been said that the English were not a musical nation. He believed that never was true, nor was it true now; and this school, the largest by far on the whole Continent of Europe, would afford an opportunity of showing that what had been said by foreign nations was untrue. It would afford also a means to the people of the metropolis of having the best and most scientific musical education, at the very minimum of cost, and he could say from personal experience that the proceedings of to-day were being watched with interest in many parts of the country. The Lord Mayor concluded by declaring the building open, and expressing a hope that for many generations to come it might do a great deal in extending the knowledge of the most beautiful of all the arts. (Loud cheers.)

After this there was some more music, the vocalists being Miss May Hallam ("Infelice," Mendelssohn) and Mr. Dalgety Henderson. The premature departure of the Lord Mayor and his party cut short the concert, a violin solo and a pianoforte solo, for which Mr. John Saunders and Miss Esther Barnet respectively were on the programme; not being performed. The company broke up, and went to inspect the new building, which is separated by the width of the street from the City of London School. The director of the music was Mr. Weist Hill.

In the evening, on the invitation of the music committee, a company of about fifty gentlemen dined at the Guildhall Tavern, Mr. R. P. Taylor presiding. The Lord Mayor, Mr. Sheriff Kirby, Sir G. A. Macfarren, M. Sainton, Dr. Hueffer, Mr. Joseph Bennett, Mr. H. Klein, Mr. Louis Engel, the Masters of the Plumbers', Skinners', and

Salters' Companies, the Rev. Dr. Abbott, Mr. H. Weist Hill, Mr. G. M. Johnson, Mr. John Bath, and Mr. Charles P. Smith, the Secretary of the Guildhall School were amongst those present. The toast of "The Guildhall School of Music" was proposed by Mr. G. N. Johnson, in a speech in which he expressed the belief that in a few years 400 class-rooms would not be found sufficient.—Mr. P. Morrison proposed the toast of "Kindred Institutions," which was responded to by Sir G. A. Macfarren, who said that he disclaimed the word "competition" in reference to the Royal Academy of Music and other institutions for the promotion of music. He regarded the Guildhall School as the child of the Academy. He concluded with an acknowledgment of the great powers of M. Sainton, who was, he said, a master of masters. The wittiest speech of the evening was made by the master of the Skinners' Company, who claimed a close connection between his craft and the divine art, because Apollo, the god of music, was also a Skinner, having flayed Marsias, an indifferent performer on the pipes. A programme of music was performed, the artists being Misses A. Swinfen and Annie Morley, Messrs. D. Henderson and S. Evans (vocalists), and Mr. R. O. Morgan at the piano.

GLEANINGS FROM ROBERT SCHUMANN'S YOUTH AND EARLY MANHOOD.

By MRS. OSCAR BERINGER.

I WILL prefatorily remark that the object of these gleanings from the early life and letters of Robert Schumann is to familiarize English readers with his personal surroundings and salient characteristics during the years 1822—40, and to present to them, in an English dress, apposite extracts from letters,* which, in Goethe's words, "are the most valuable legacies a human being can bequeath to posterity." This is applicable, in its strongest sense, to Schumann's correspondence, which is a faithful mirror of a soul almost feminine in its capacity for subtle and manifold shades of passionate sentiment.

I propose to deal only with the man, leaving the composer in abler hands. I will at the same time reserve the right of reference to such of his works as were a direct outcome of his overpowering individuality, and solely inspired by actual emotions or occurrences in the life of their creator.

It seems an incontrovertible fact that Schumann, although willing to drudge cheerfully at the technique of the piano to an extent which eventually resulted in the total incapacitation of his right hand, shirked the acquisition of theoretical knowledge until the magnitude of his conceptions drove him restlessly onward to the acquirement of new channels of expression for thoughts still more overwhelming in their insistence for emotional speech.

Reissmann confirms this in the following:—"The fact that Schumann composed only when inwardly impelled to do so is the most essential feature of his musical nature. A merely mechanical pursuit of music, without which no regular study is conceivable, was utterly repugnant to him; but such was the strength of his individuality, that he mastered an adequate form for his musical conceptions by *instinct* rather than by hard study, and gave to the beauty of his ideas for the most part a corresponding concrete perfection."

Schumann, like Mendelssohn, enjoyed a happy and sunny childhood. The youngest of five children, he was the spoilt and indulged darling of his mother and god-mother, the Mayoress of Zwickau (Saxony), where he was born, 1810. We learn from Piltzing, his great chum, and comrade in many mischievous pranks, that Schumann was a slender, fair-headed boy, who delighted in tormenting, and playing practical jokes upon his sisters and the servants. His father was the head of the firm of "Schumann Brothers," well known in the literary world of the beginning of this century as publishing booksellers.

Both his parents early recognized Schumann's talent for music, and his father entertained a strong desire to place him under Weber. This plan was however, violently opposed by his mother, a narrow-minded, middle-class Philistine, who considered the pursuit of an art, and especially that of music, lowering and *infra dig*, and but seldom lost an opportunity of throwing cold water upon her son's musical aspirations. His father on the contrary, so far encouraged them that

* Jugendbriefe, edited by Clara Schumann, Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig.

he provided him with a grand piano by a then celebrated maker, an abundance of music-desks, and *carte blanche* at the musicseller's.

Piltzing (who shared Schumann's pianoforte lessons with Kuntsch, the organist at Zwickau) continues:—"Since the arrival of the piano, we have played no end of music for four hands—symphonies by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven—original compositions by Hummel, Weber, Czerny—everything."

Schumann also possessed everything that had up to that time (1822) been written by then renowned masters for the piano, but does not seem to have evinced any preference for the works of any special composer. When playing at sight, he was always very clever in quickly surmounting difficulties by adroit alteration without halting.

At irregular intervals little performances were given at the Schumanns' when all the available musically-talented children assembled together, and instrumental as well as vocal soli were given. These little concerts were, however, solely given to satisfy an inner craving, and with no idea of display, for the whole auditory consisted of a few playmates, and now and then Schumann's father, who, as a rule, pretended that he heard and saw nothing of the whole entertainment. The little orchestra generally consisted of two violins, two flutes, one clarinet, and two horns. The pieces performed were arranged by Schumann. The bass and all further shortcomings he made good at the piano, from which he also conducted.

The special mention made by Piltzing (also a member of the aforesaid orchestra) of the fact that "Kuntsch never taught us harmony," is a conclusive proof that all Schumann's youthful achievements in this direction were the result of, and prompted by, instinctive and inborn talent.

His father's death in 1826 was the first practical confirmation of the gloom which, even then, commenced to overshadow his bright young life, and later, resulted in that brooding silence and impenetrable reserve which threatened to reduce him to the language of music as the only one in which his thoughts could find speech.

About this time (1827) he was much attracted by the young wife of a Dr. Carus, and was inspired by her exquisite singing to write a series of songs. We find a tolerably satisfactory index to his intellectual development at this period in a letter to Flechsig, a former schoolfellow, and, in later years, a devoted friend:—"I have just finished Sophocles. Shortly before, Plato's *Criton*; could not persuade myself to like him, and, moreover, only partially understood him. Plato is food for men, Tacitus and Sallust much attract me, Cicero I cannot endure. What was he after all but a pettifogging charlatan and braggart? One has to forget his whole individuality to be able to find any pleasure in him—and that I *can't* do. Horace was a libertine, nothing more. Jean Paul is still my prime favourite, and I place him above everybody else—not even Schiller excepted. I do not understand Goethe yet." His mother still hotly and obstinately opposed his ardent and openly expressed desire to pursue an artistic career, in which she was supported by his guardian, and his departure for the University at Leipzig* early in 1828, which first severance of all home ties, plainly cost Schumann a few tolerably bitter pangs.

We find in a letter (which is not without a certain pathos, as indicating the struggle raised in his heart by his mother's opposition to his dearest wishes), dated May 21, 1828, touching proofs of his filial affection and obedience:—"This is the first letter that you receive from Leipzig. Beloved mother, may you read all my letters with just the same indulgent, loving eyes as this first—never with angry ones. I arrived here last Thursday in excellent preservation—if a little sad—and, in the first blush of my academic dignity and citizenship stepped into the teeming life and new world of this vast town. I am still quite well, even after several days, but not entirely happy, for I long from the bottom of my heart for my quiet home where I was born, and have enjoyed so many happy hours in communion with nature. Where shall I find nature here, where everything is distorted by art? No valley, no mountain, no forest, in which I can give free rein to my thoughts. No place, except a locked room, where I can be alone, distracted by the everlasting noise and bustle below. In addition to this torment, I am torn by an eternal soul-strife as to my choice of a subject. Cold jurisprudence, which repels me from the

outset by its icy definitions, can never please me. Medicine I will not, and theology I cannot study. I am always engaged in a hand-to-hand combat with my own nature, and seek in vain for a guide who could advise me what to do. And yet—it must be so. I *must* tackle jurisprudence, cold, dry, as it may be. I will conquer myself, and when a human being *wills*, he can accomplish everything. I shall console myself with philosophy and history as my principal studies. So far, so good. *All* will go well, and I will not look into the future with saddened eyes when all may be so happy—if I stand firm. . . ."

(To be continued.)

MEYERBEER'S "ROBERT LE DIABLE."

(Concluded from page 788.)

"But when a director has prepared, like a good general, everything necessary for the success of the work on the stage, his troubles begin for the front of the house. Every one wants something from him on the occasion of a first representation; and that of *Robert le Diable* was exciting public interest to the highest degree. Everything and every one must be thought of. It is necessary, in assigning places, to displease no one, and above all to excite no jealousies so as to have no irritated enemies in the house. Such a journalist will never pardon you for having given his fellow-journalist a better place than himself. The author and composer, the leading artists, the *claqueurs* must be satisfied. The care, the foresight, the conferences, the instructious indispensable to secure the efficient working of the *claque* at each representation, and above all on great critical occasions, must be dealt with elsewhere. One must remember, too, the number of the box that Madame ——— would like to have, the number of the stall preferred by the friend of a minister or of the editor of some great journal. One must respect moreover, the omnipotence of the unknown journalist as of the journalist in vogue; and on the critical day the existence is revealed of a crowd of newspapers not previously heard of."

On November 22, 1831, the bill announced the first representation of *Robert the Devil*; and Dr. Véron, after a brief repose during which he was not, let us hope, visited even by the graceful apparition of the nuns in the ballet scene of Meyerbeer's master-piece, awoke to all the anxieties—anguish one might almost say—of the situation. First he was visited by the conductor, the chorus-master, the ballet-master, and the musical conductor, from whom he was anxiously awaiting the latest reports. Was nobody ill? Had no singer a sore throat, no dancer a sprained ankle? Almost every leading artist in the establishment had a part in *Robert le Diable*, and one indisposition would prevent the completeness of the representation. Reassured on this point the worthy doctor shut himself up in his private room, and with his door hermetically closed defied the pressing letters, and more pressing visits from those dilatory persons who beg for a box or claim a stall at the very last moment.

The first representation of *Robert le Diable* was a series of accidents which might well have had the gravest consequences. In the third act a screen, to which were hooked a dozen lighted lamps, fell forward with a crash at the very moment when Mdle. Dorus, the impersonator of Alice, was entering. The screen was very near falling upon the singer's head, but she was not alarmed. She retreated a few steps, and continued her part without the slightest sign of trepidation.

After the chorus of demons in this same act a curtain has to rise from beneath the stage, and, pulled upwards by a number of wires, to shut off the previous scene. This curtain of clouds reached a great height, when suddenly the wires gave way, and the curtain fell. Mdle. Taglioni, who represented the abbess, and was reposing on her tomb in the character of a statue not yet animated, had only time to return suddenly to life and spring to the side of the stage in order to avoid being seriously injured. The principal curtain was at once lowered, to go up again soon afterwards, amid the general applause of the public, much struck by the original and brilliantly-lighted scene of the cloister. A much more alarming accident took place in the fifth act, at the close of the admirable trio which brings the work

* Where he matriculated as Stud. jur.

to an end. Bertram was to sink by means of an "English trap"—"vampire trap" in the phraseology of our own stage—to the regions of the dead. Robert, on the contrary, converted by Providence and the prayers of Alice, was to remain on earth in order to marry the Princess Isabelle. But Nourrit, the representative of Robert, in a moment of impulse advanced and fell into the opening left by the descending trap. A cry of despair arose from behind the scenes. Everyone thought that Nourrit was killed.

Mdlle. Dorus, who had been in no way affected by the danger she herself had encountered, now ran from the stage weeping and sobbing. The incident, however, was differently appreciated in different parts of the theatre. The public thought, without understanding why, that Robert had given himself to the devil and was following him to his dark abode. On the stage the general belief was that Nourrit had met with a fatal accident. Beneath the stage the sudden arrival of Nourrit had caused no particular emotion either to himself or to M. Levasseur, who had preceded him in his downward flight. Fortunately, the mattresses and feather bed prepared for the descent of Bertram had not been removed when, in his turn, or rather out of his turn, Robert also went down. Levasseur was just going up stairs to his dressing-room when suddenly turning round he saw Nourrit make his rapid but harmless fall. "What the deuce are you doing here?" he said to him; "have they altered the final scene!" But Nourrit had no time to reply. He was in too great a hurry to reassure his friends and the public as to his personal condition; and before many minutes had passed he was able to appear on the stage, leading by the hand Mdlle. Dorus, now weeping with joy. There was a burst of applause from the whole house. The curtain fell, and the names of the author and composer were announced to the public amidst the most frantic enthusiasm. Before retiring to rest Nourrit had himself bled, whether to calm his excitement or to prevent evil effects from the fall does not appear. Bleeding was an absurdity of those days which has now fortunately passed out of fashion.

M. Levasseur, who had obtained a wonderful success in the character of Bertram, was not bled. But Dr. Véron voluntarily bled himself for Levasseur's benefit. He raised his nightly fee, that is to say (a payment independent of salary) from 50*s.* to 100*s.*; this latter being the same modest fee (*les feux* in French) which the tenor and prima donna received.

The success of *Robert le Diable* was both brilliant and lasting. The work was destined to make the tour of Europe. At the beginning the novelty of the subject, the splendour of the scenery, the completeness of the staging, and the brilliant dancing of Mdlle. Taglioni in the scene of the resuscitated nuns, constituted its principal attractions. But before long the score was understood and the music universally admired. Those who had heard it once wished to hear it again; and the more the work was listened to the more it was applauded. Dr. Véron is probably right when he declares that "at no epoch do the annals of the stage record such a success."

The legend of *Robert le Diable* has been so much altered and has received such numerous additions at the hands of Scribe, that only the merest traces of the original story are to be found in the libretto prepared ostensibly on that subject for Meyerbeer. The historian, however, quoted by Scheible in *Das Kloster*, who records the doings of *Robert le Diable*, disposes of his own statements, one by the other, when he tells us that Robert, Duke of Normandy, was born in 763, and that he was the son of Charlemagne. After that we are not much astonished to find him stating that Robert, who is chiefly known to Englishmen as William the Conqueror's father, was by his mother's vow made over to the devil before he was born; that he was endowed with the power of assuming the forms of beasts; that he was in the habit of flying in the air supported by his familiar spirit; and that his *famulus* ended by dropping him, when, falling on a tree, he went to pieces. It is also related of Robert that he made a pilgrimage to Rome with the view of interesting the Pope in his case and getting the curse under which he suffered removed; and, like all these magicians, he once fell in love with a princess.

At Meyerbeer's request Scribe had made Robert and his familiar spirit the principal personages in a work which was originally intended for the Opéra Comique, and which, like *Der Freyschütz*, evidently its model, contained in its first shape spoken dialogue and no ballet. When it was afterwards taken to the Académie a new or at least an extended form was given to it. The spoken dialogue was put into

recitative, and almost an entire act of ballet was introduced. The added spectacular scenes may well have spoilt the character of the work, which is disconnected and extravagant as now presented. Scribe, however, had endeavoured to treat his subject as such subjects are treated in mediæval legends of the same description. Bertram, with a certain likeness to Caspar, bears a greater resemblance to Mephistopheles; and the librettist has not forgotten that in the popular tale Robert was already before his birth looked upon as a child of the devil. Bertram in fact is his father. Robert makes journeys, becomes enamoured of a princess, and is saved by Alice, his good angel—much as in some half dozen legends the man who has made himself over to the devil is saved by the favour of the Holy Virgin. Analyze it, and good legendary elements are to be found in Scribe's *Robert le Diable*; but in their artificial combination they no more make a genuine legend than certain chemical powders which mixed together effervesce, produce natural mineral water.

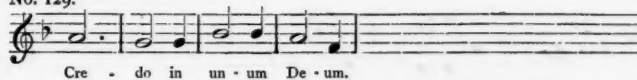
THE HISTORY OF A MUSICAL PHRASE ATTEMPTED.

A Sketch by Sir GEORGE GROVE.

(Continued from page 789.)

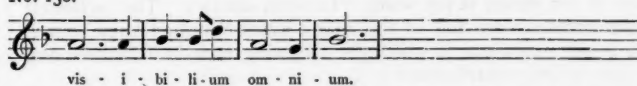
Franz Schubert (1797—1828), like Beethoven, began his life in a church choir—that of St. Stephen's and the Hofkapelle at Vienna. His attendance at these must have familiarized him with the phrase, and in his masses he makes considerable use of it, introducing it in four of the six. Its first appearance is in the first Mass, in F, which was composed in June, 1814, when he was just seventeen. It occurs in the early part of the Credo. Indeed that movement leads off with a passage which is identical with our phrase, except in the fact that it begins not on the tonic, but on the third, the rest remaining as if it had begun on the tonic:—

No. 129.



A few bars later the phrase itself occurs *en passant*, thus:

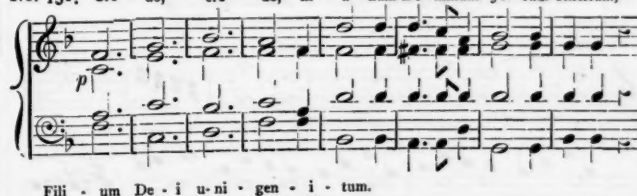
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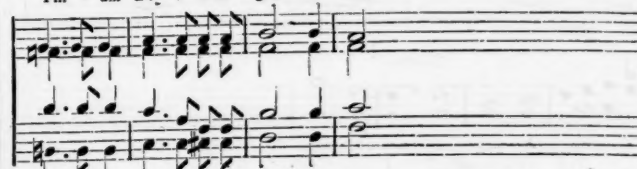
and then shortly afterwards it enters in all its majesty as the expression of belief "in unum Dominum Jesum Christum," and it would be difficult to find a broader or more satisfying passage, emphatically "Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full."

than Schubert has given to the music of this clause:—

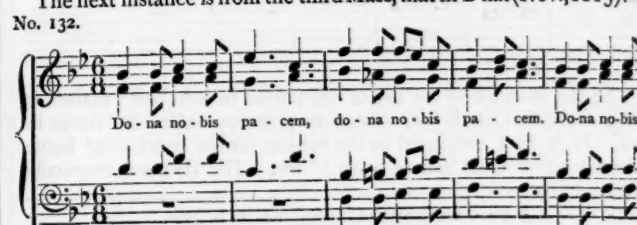
No. 131. Cre - do, cre - do, in u - num Do - minum Je - sum Christum,



The next instance is from the third Mass, that in B flat (Nov., 1815):—



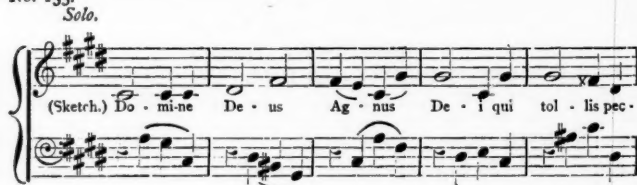
No. 132.





The third example is much more important. It is from the Mass in A flat, which stands alone among Schubert's works for the length of time taken in its composition, and for the amount of after-correction which it received. It was begun in April, 1819, and not finished till September, 1822, and was undoubtedly altered after that date.* The phrase is used throughout the "Domine Deus" section of the Gloria, the following passage occurring as a solo for the contralto, bass, and tenor successively, with "Miserere nobis" and an orchestral passage between each:—

No. 133.



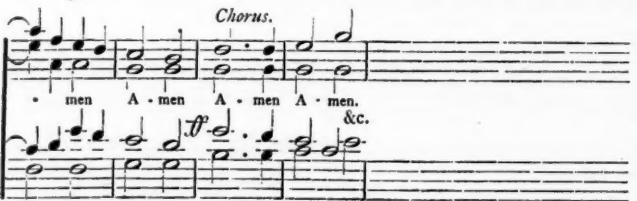
The Quoniam is in chorus, splendid; and contains a passing occurrence of our phrase at the words "Tu solus sanctus." The orchestral accompaniments are full of the charm which Schubert knew so well how to put into them, to which the following melody in clarinet and bassoon largely contributes:—

No. 134.



The finale of the Credo has an allusion to the phrase which may or may not be intentional, but which is worth quoting:—

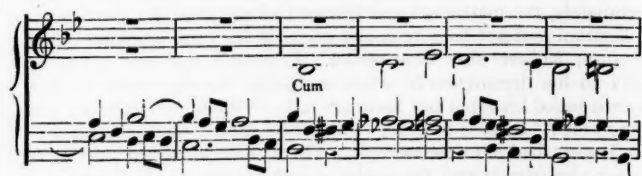
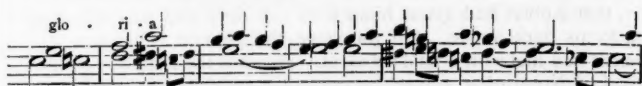
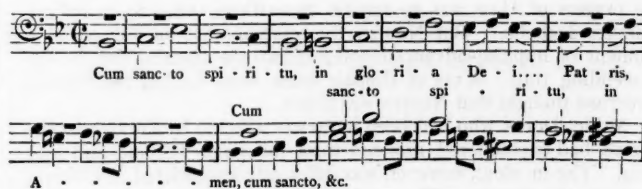
No. 135.



The last instance of the use of our phrase in Schubert's masses is in the sixth, that in E flat, written very shortly before his death in 1828. It is here employed as the subject for the concluding fugue in the Gloria—"Cum Sancto Spiritu" etc. The theme is unusually

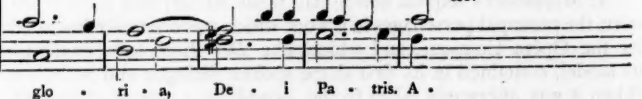
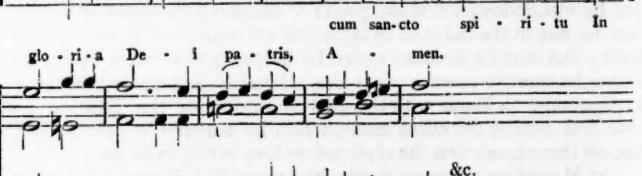
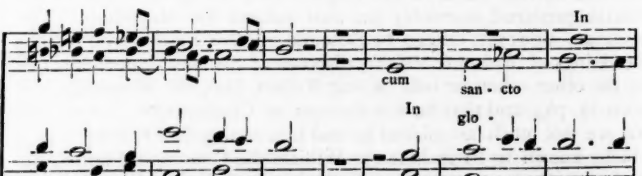
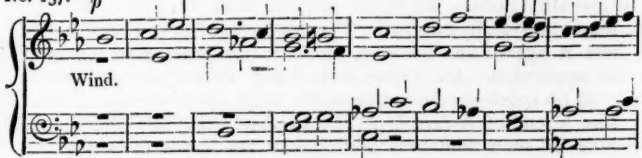
long, and the answers take place at intervals of ten and twelve bars alternately:—

No. 136.



The stretto begins with eleven bars for the wind instruments, after which the voices take up the subject in its close form:—

No. 137.



(To be continued.)

* See "Dictionary of Music," vol. iii. p. 336b.

Reviews.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

VIOLIN AND PIANO.—Any new work from the pen of Mr. C. Hubert H. Parry will be sure to command the interest due to a composer who has already done so much good service in upholding the dignity of English musical art and in whose case high aims have invariably been accompanied by scholarly achievement. The "Partita in D minor" for violin and pianoforte, recently published by William Czerny, besides exhibiting the sound musicianly qualities which will be taken for granted by those acquainted with the same composer's more important contributions to chamber music, is written in a spirit of appropriate quaintness, and by many a graceful conceit the interests of each instrument are admirably sustained throughout. In the full and majestic opening, as in several of the succeeding lighter numbers, the influence of Brahms is apparent, but without approach to slavish imitation; and the "Bourrées fantastiques" in No. 5, which would alone be sufficient to attract the attention of violinists in search of something new, are as original as they are charming. There is much interest also in "Passepied," No. 6, which, written in the Rondo form, brings the *suite* to an effective termination.

PIANOFORTE.—The "Serenade" for orchestra, in E flat, composed for the Philharmonic Society, by Thomas Wingham, and first performed at the Society's concert of March 26 last year, has been arranged as a pianoforte duet by Ernest Kiver (Novello, Ewer & Co.), while the various orchestral effects are skilfully indicated. This transcription presents no difficulties calculated to embarrass pianists of fair average proficiency, and the melodic beauties of the composition, which are considerable, come out clearly in the present form, with the result of an effective duet. Marriott and Williams send a spirited "Tarantelle" in G minor, by Joseph Trousselle, who has very successfully availed himself of the opportunities for fanciful and eccentric effects afforded by this form of composition.

Poetry.

A RUSTIC SONG.

(From Tennyson's new volume.)

What did ye do, and what did ye saäy,
Wi' the wild white rose, and the woodbine sa gaäy,
An' the midders all mow'd, and the sky sa blue—
What did ye saäy, and what did ye do,
When ye thowt there were nawbody watchin' o' you,
And you and your Sally was forkin' the haäy,
At the end of the daäy,
For the last loäd hoäm?

What did we do, and what did we saäy,
Wi' the briar sa green, and the willer sa graäy,
An' the midders all mow'd, and the sky sa blue—
Do ye think I be gawin' to tell it to you,
What we mowt saäy, and what we mowt do,
When me and my Sally was forkin' the haäy,
At the end of the daäy,
For the last loäd hoäm?

But what did ye saäy, and what did ye do,
Wi' the butterflies out, and the swallows at plaäy,
An' the midders all mow'd, and the sky sa blue?
Why, coom then, owd feller, I'll tell it to you;
For me and my Sally we sweär'd to be true,
To be true to each other, let 'appen what maäy,
Till the end of the daäy,
And the last loäd hoäm.

Occasional Notes.

Various accounts of M. Salvayre's new opera, *Egmont*, which have appeared in the French papers do not convey a

very favourable impression of that new work. The librettists have evidently made mincemeat of Goethe's drama, and the composer has followed suit, by shaping his music entirely according to the traditions of grand opera in general and of *Les Huguenots* in particular. Brackenbourg, Clara's disappointed lover, re-appears as Blackembourg, her heavy father, who sings "des strophes un peu larmoyantes." The Regent, Margaret of Parma, on the other hand, whose description as a formidable potentate with a *soupeçon* of moustache on her upper lip every reader of Goethe's *Egmont* remembers, has undergone an even more curious transmutation. She is a lightsome and frisky matron who warbles graceful ditties, somewhat after the manner of the Queen of Navarre in *Les Huguenots*. It has frequently been remarked that the stage even more than the church is ruled by custom and tradition, and M. Salvayre's opera is another illustration of that dictum.

Prince Komatsu of Japan (the uncle of the Mikado) and the Princess Komatsu, accompanied by the Consul-General of Japan and suite, witnessed the performance of *The Mikado* at the Savoy Theatre last week. His feelings on seeing the presentment of his venerable ancestors through the medium of Mr. Gilbert's fancy may be more readily imagined than described. Pity that the exalted rank of our visitor does not permit him to confide those impressions to the newspapers after the example of one of his countrymen, who, as duly reported in *The Musical World*, witnessed *The Mikado* in Germany and gravely discussed the historic, legal, and ethnological accuracy of its *couleur locale*. In the meantime we must restrain our curiosity until the publication of Prince Komatsu's book, by means of which, like all other Eastern potentates, he is sure to celebrate his safe return from the confines of the outer barbarians.

Here are some statistics published by a German paper upon the manufacture of pianofortes. Germany produces yearly 73,000; England, 45,000; the United States, 42,000; and France 20,000 of these instruments. Canada also supplies a not inconsiderable number of pianos, so that these countries may be supposed to manufacture 200,000 altogether, yearly. What becomes of the old instruments? one is inclined to ask, with our contemporary.

The correspondent of a contemporary telegraphs from Vienna:—A Requiem has been held in the chapel of a house built at the Emperor's expense on the site of the Ring Theatre. Numerous relations of those who perished in the fire there five years ago were present, and the singing could scarcely be heard for the sobbing of the bereft. The Requiem was held by the wish of the Emperor, who also directed that the house, which contains splendid apartments in its four storeys, the front being taken up by the chapel, should be let, and the revenues distributed to the poor. But as yet superstitious awe or the high price of the apartments has prevented a single one of them from being let.

The Crown Prince of Germany, on the occasion of his last visit to Weimar, spoke in the most glowing terms of Wagner's *Parsifal* while conversing with two local musicians. After expressing his enthusiasm over the work as a whole, the Prince added that the second act was as yet a little strange to him, but that he knew of nothing more impressive than the first and third acts; that this music seemed to him the most devotional that he had ever heard, and that he did not wish to see a representation of *Parsifal* elsewhere than at Bayreuth.

MR. W. G. CUSINS begs to announce that he has REMOVED to 40, MONTAGU SQUARE, W.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS, ST. JAMES'S HALL.—
MONDAY EVENING NEXT, Dec. 20. Programme: Quartet in A minor (Schumann), Op. 41, No. 1, for two violins, viola, and violoncello; Clavierstück I. (Fr. Schubert), posthumous, composed 1828; Polonaise in A flat (Chopin), Op. 53; Canto Religioso, and Tempo di Minuetto (Piaatti), for violoncello, with pianoforte accompaniment; Serenade Trio in D major (Beethoven), Op. 8, for violin, viola, and violoncello. Executants: Madame Norman-Neruda, MM. L. Ries, Straus, Piaatti, and Max Pauer. Vocalist, Mrs. Henschel. Commence at eight.—Stalls, 7s. 6d.; balcony, 3s.; admission, 1s. Programmes and tickets at Chappell & Co.'s, 50, New Bond Street; and at Austin's, Piccadilly.

SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERTS, ST. JAMES'S HALL.—
THIS (SATURDAY) AFTERNOON, Dec. 18. Programme selected from the works of BEETHOVEN: Quartet in B flat, Op. 18, No. 6, for two violins, viola, and violoncello; Sonata in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2, for pianoforte alone; Romance in F major, Op. 50, for violin, with pianoforte accompaniment; Sonata in A major, Op. 47 (dedicated to Kreutzer), for pianoforte and violin. Executants: Madame Norman-Neruda, Miss Agnes Zimmerman, MM. L. Ries, Straus, and Piaatti. Vocalist, Mrs. Henschel. Accompanist, Mr. Frantzen. Commence at three.—Stalls, 7s. 6d.; balcony, 3s.; admission, 1s. Programmes and tickets at Chappell and Co.'s, 50, New Bond Street; and at Austin's, Piccadilly.

THE PORTMAN ROOMS, BAKER STREET, W.
AFTERNOON—WEDNESDAY, December 8; THURSDAY, December 16, at 3.30.
EVENING—TUESDAY, December 28; TUESDAY, January 11, 1887.
At 8 o'clock.

MR. WILLIAM NICHOLL'S Vocal Recitals.

Mr. WILLIAM NICHOLL (pupil of Signor Vannuccini, Florence; and Signor Ettore Fiori, London; and Parepa Rosa Gold Medallist, Royal Academy of Music (1886), has the honour to announce a Series of FOUR VOCAL RECITALS, at the Portman Rooms (late Madame Tussaud's).

PATRONS—Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A., Sir Geo. Macfarren, Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, Arthur Chappell, Esq., Signor A. Randegger, The Viscountess Folkestone, Lady Adela Larking, Lady Crosley, Signor Ettore Fiori, Geo. Aitchison, Esq., A.R.A.

Subscription Tickets for the series of Four Concerts: Single Tickets, 15s.; Double, 21s.; Family, to admit three, 25s. Single Tickets, 5s. and 2s. each. To be had at Messrs. Chappell & Co., Bond Street, W.; Messrs. Cramer & Co., Bond Street and Regent Street; Messrs. Stanley, Lucas & Co., Bond Street; or from W. Nicholl, 28, Belsize Road, N.W.

Mr. W. Nicholl will be assisted by the following artists:—Miss Louise Phillips, Miss Hamlin, Madame Wilson-Osman, Miss Gertrude Muir Wood (her first appearance), Madame Isabel Fassett, Miss Annie Dwelley, Mr. John Bridson, Mr. Alec Marsh, Madlle. Bertha Brousil (violin), Mons. Adolphe Brousil (violin), Miss Constance Bache, Miss Amina Goodwin, and Mr. Septimus Webbe (piano). Accompanist: Miss Mary Carmichael. A Broadwood Concert Grand (kindly lent) will be used at the Recitals.

Schumann's "Spanish Liederspiel" (for four voices) will form the first part of the Recital on December 8; the first part of the Second Recital (December 16) will be devoted to Handel; the first part of the Third Recital (December 28) to Henschel's "Serbisches Liederspiel" (for four voices); and the first part of the Fourth and Last Recital (January 11, 1887) to Brahms's Second Set of "Liebeslieder."

Books of the Words at all the Recitals.

PEOPLE'S CONCERT SOCIETY.

THIS WEEK'S CONCERTS:

SUNDAY, December 19, at THE INSTITUTE, SOUTH PLACE, FINSBURY, E.C., at 7 p.m.—Schubert's String Quartet in D minor, and Haydn's in D major, Op. 64, No. 1.

ARTISTS.

Herr KUMMER.
Mr. RICHARD HARRISON.
Mr. DONKIN.
M. ALBERT.

VOCALIST.—Miss JOSEPHINE CRAVINO.
ACCOMPANIST.—Mr. CHARLES IMHOF.

Collection to defray expenses.

MONDAY, December 20, at OMEGA HALL, OMEGA PLACE, ALPHA ROAD, LISSON GROVE, N.W., at 8 p.m.—Beethoven's Trio in C minor, and Mendelssohn's in C minor.

ARTISTS.

Mr. W. SUTTON.
Mr. WILLIAM C. HANN.
Miss RAWSON.

VOCALISTS.—Mrs. HENRY HARRISON and Mr. GEORGE LAWRENCE.

Admission, 6d. and 1d.

THE LONDON SYMPHONY CONCERTS.— Conductor, Mr. HENSCHEL.

SIXTH CONCERT, at ST. JAMES'S HALL, WEDNESDAY NEXT, Dec. 22, at 3 p.m. Programme: Overture to Schiller's *Turandot*; Menuet from the 1st Act of *Euryanthe*; Adagio and Rondo from the Concerto for Bassoon, Op. 75, Mr. Wotton (WEBER: born DEC. 18, 1786); Symphony in C minor, No. 5 (Beethoven); Quintet from the 3rd Act of the *Meistersingers of Nuremberg*, Miss Lily Crabtree, Miss Agnes Janson, Mr. Charles Kaiser, Mr. Maldwyn Humphreys, Mr. Alec Marsh; Overture to *Rienzi* (Wagner). Orchestra of 80 performers. Leader, Mr. Carrodus. Reserved Seats, 7s. 6d. and 3s.; admission, 1s. At Austin's Office, St. James's Hall; and usual agents. N. Vert, Manager, 6, Cork Street, W.

DRURY LANE.—CLOSED for the unprecedented preparations for the pantomime, "THE FORTY THIEVES," to be produced Boxing Night, Dec. 27. Two performances daily during the Christmas Holidays. Box-office now open.

WILLIS'S ROOMS, KING STREET, ST. JAMES'S.

VACANT DATES

FOR

Banquets, Balls, Public Meetings, Concerts, &c.

Are now being booked.

The proprietors of Willis's Rooms have succeeded in making such arrangements as to ensure the return of the old and valued prestige these rooms so long enjoyed. Special attention given to each department. E. DAWKINS, Manager.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS.—Advertisements should be sent not later than 5 o'clock on Wednesdays, to the Office, at Messrs. MALLETT & Co.'s, 68 & 70, Wardour Street, London, W. Telephone No. 3849. Telegraphic address: "ASMAL," London.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.—The Subscription to THE MUSICAL WORLD is now reduced to 17s. 6d. per annum (payable in advance).

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1886.

A VETERAN COMPOSER.

THE publication of a Jubilee song, "Our Empress Queen" (Weekes & Co.), by Mr. Henry Russell, has recalled to the minds of the younger and too forgetful generation that that veteran musician is still amongst us, and still in the full possession of powers which at one time won him almost unprecedented popularity. It is not easy to give to those whose memory does not reach so far back an idea of the enthusiasm excited by Mr. Russell's singing of his own songs thirty or forty years ago. Perhaps Sims Reeves is the only vocalist now before the public who commands the unbounded almost personal admiration of his audiences to a similar degree. When Mr. Russell came back from America, where he had gone in 1834 to settle in the backwoods, and had become a singer and composer instead, he found himself famous almost at a bound. The English public, endorsing the opinion of the American public, liked his songs, and they liked the singer even better. Some of these songs, amounting we are assured to close upon 800 in number, went straight to the heart of the nation. "Cheer, boys, cheer," was played by the regimental bands when our soldiers set out for the Crimea. "Woodman, spare that tree" has been sung by generations of boys and girls, many of whom had perhaps never heard of Henry Russell. "The Old Arm-Chair" became the prototype

of what may be described as the domestic song. Many subsequent grandfathers and grandmothers were placed in it, discoursing sentimentally to their offspring, and listening to distant village chimes, or to the ticking of the "Old Clock," another of Mr. Russell's songs which has also become the model of innumerable imitators. But more successful almost than these was the highly sensational ballad—one might almost call it a cantata for a single voice—"The Ship on Fire," which, as the composer humorously relates, was very nearly bringing the fire brigade to his door, while he was rehearsing its grand effects with stentorian lung-power in his own room. To attribute any exalted artistic value to these songs would be a mode of flattery which the veteran composer would be the first to disclaim. They were written for the people, and to the hearts of the people they went, thus fulfilling their destination. But even as a matter of art, their manly tone and straightforward diction is at least infinitely preferable to the love-sick sighings and cooings which latter-day culture has brought into fashion. Mr. Russell's latest song, written in honour of the Queen, to words by Mr. Clement Scott, shows all the characteristics of its composer's style in undiminished force. The tune is simple, and clings to the ear. Everyone can sing it sight, and having sung it once, can remember it. There is no reason why it should not hold its own amongst the more learned and ambitious efforts which Her Majesty's Jubilee will no doubt bring forth in abundance.

Correspondence.

THE PERFORMANCE OF ORATORIOS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR,—The performance of *The Golden Legend* at the Crystal Palace on Dec. 4, has called forth a most important letter from Sir George Grove, who with his usual acumen has discovered and broached one of the most important musical questions which can be found. Regard for your space, and for my own time, perhaps should prevent me from offering a few remarks on the same subject, but I must trust to your kindness, and I can only hope that a more powerful pen will be attracted by them.

Should oratorio be treated as "Sacred Drama?" Most certainly this was the intention of those who first invented and introduced it, and if so, the proper place for its performance is the church where the responsive choirs and position of the principal characters offer exactly the opportunities for the peculiar dramatic action required, which is that of gesticulation rather than change of position; moreover the orchestra and organ are placed in such a manner that they do not interfere with them.

That there is a distinct tendency in this direction is evident to all musical observers who note the ever increasing number of church performances. Sir George Grove has happily sounded the key note, and it is to be hoped that ere long "oratorio" will be given in the only place suitable to its performance, with proper and becoming action, and with a chorus and orchestra reduced to reasonable proportions, of the best quality. That such performances would be edifying to the congregations and advantageous to musical art, as well as conducive to religious observance, few can doubt who were present on Thursday last at the festival in Westminster Abbey, in aid of the funds of the Royal Society of Musicians.

Should oratorio be treated as ordinary "Lyric Drama" and be performed in the concert-room, as Sir George Grove suggests, with the

orchestra hidden from sight, something would be gained, but much would be lost, which would accrue from the plan I have proposed. Indeed, I devoutly hope the time is not far distant when concert-room representations of "Sacred Lyric Drama" (oratorio) will be a thing of the past, and when instead of the monstrous gatherings of musicians, vocal and instrumental, at a ruinous cost to the projectors of concerts, and frequently to the great detriment of the music, every parish church and cathedral will have its own choir and orchestra directed by its own "master of the music," and resume its place in the cultivation and direction of the sacred "musical art" of England.—I am, sir, faithfully yours,

ALFRED GILBERT.

The Woodlands,
89, Maida Vale, Dec. 12, 1886.

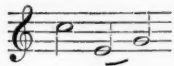
MUSICAL LONDON.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR,—If I recollect rightly, the question whether London might reckon itself a musical city was raised in your columns several weeks ago. Some amusing evidence on this point came under my notice lately, which I hope may be of some slight interest to you. Not long ago I went to a pianoforte recital by one of the many minor pianists now before the public, and at one of the smaller concert rooms of the metropolis. The audience was of the type generally to be seen at an afternoon concert, and consisted chiefly of ladies and girls, with a small sprinkling of gentlemen. The programme contained the names of composers arranged chronologically, with dates against each name, which gave a slightly educational flavour to the entertainment. It might, therefore, not unreasonably have been expected that the programme would have gathered an audience whose musical education would be slightly above the average. The first six or eight items on the programme chanced to be very short, each being complete in itself, such as "rondo," "gavotte," "passepied," but these were followed by a sonata of Beethoven's. Even before this more important work was reached, I observed that several of my immediate neighbours had lost their places on the programme. They began by mistaking Scarlatti for Bach, and went on to confuse Handel with Haydn, but this was nothing to what followed. The Beethoven sonata, I may mention, was one in which the movements do not run into each other, so the performer made a slight pause at the conclusion of each. By the time the third movement was reached, not only were my afore-mentioned neighbours far ahead of the performer on the programme, but the general public, or perhaps I should say the score or two of listeners near me, were getting "hopelessly mixed." It had not struck me as dreadful to mistake Scarlatti for Bach, but it did give me rather a shock to hear the slow movement of the Beethoven described as a rondo by Hummel; but the highest point of absurdity was reached when the last movement passed muster as Weber's "Invitation to the Valse"! I was glad to notice, however, that the audience did experience a sense of misgiving, a restless uncertainty as to where the performer had got to. During an interval of her absence from the platform, two merry-looking girls behind me lamented freely the fact of their having lost their place. I had no wish to play Sir Oracle, being only an amateur of very moderate attainments, but their lamentations moved me to pity, and I turned and told them where we were. The information was gratefully received, and at once passed on to their mother, aunt, or chaperone in charge. She, however, received it coldly, and with the exclamation which I believe is usually expressed by the letters h-u-m-p-h. The concert then proceeded until a Polonaise of Chopin brought the next bracket to a conclusion, when my two girls leaned forward and ventured to ask if I would be so kind as to tell them where we were then. I did so, and at the same moment the performer responded to a vigorous encore by giving Chopin's Funeral March. Now the next item on the programme was a Valse de Concert by a modern composer. The chaperone was as before informed of my verdict. But unfortunately she was unaware of the encore, and consulting her programme to the solemn sound of the march she whispered, "Well, dear, it does not sound much like a waltz, I must say. I doubt if that gentleman knows quite as much as he professes!" And I am not quite sure that I

did not catch the significant phrase of "mind his own business." At this point I rose, and resisting the temptation to acknowledge what I had overheard by a polite salutation to the lady, I left the room. Whether she was re-assured on the waltz question by the second and more cheerful subject of the march I shall never know. But after all, I reflected, her very incredulity showed some knowledge. She must in some way have been dimly conscious that a waltz should be in 3-4 time, while the march being played was not; and probably her learning did not go so far as to make her aware that even a waltz is sometimes preceded by an introduction in common time. Whether this audience was in anything typical of the London concert-going public I have no means of judging. I can only express the hope that it was not.—I remain, yours faithfully,

London, Dec. 6.



Concerts.

POPULAR CONCERTS.

The programme of last Saturday's Popular Concert comprised Hadyn's string quartet, in E flat, Op. 71; Brahms's pianoforte quartet in G minor, Op. 25; Schumann's Faschingsschwank for pianoforte solo, and violoncello soli. The executants were Madame Norman-Neruda, MM. Ries, Straus and Piatti. Mr. Santley was the vocalist, and his songs were Schubert's "Orpheus" and Handel's "Del minacciar del vento." Mr. Sidney Naylor accompanied.

Last Monday's concert introduced two important novelties to a first hearing, widely different both in period and style of composition, namely Johannes Brahms's string quartet in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1, and a violin sonata by Corelli, published more than a century and a half previously. That the old master's work has a far better chance of an enduring existence at these concerts, than the one of the (happily) still active composer, can scarcely be open to doubt. Of all the works of extended proportion bearing the name of this author there is perhaps none of a generally less captivating character, sombreness of the darkest tint prevailing almost throughout, with the single exception of the adagio conceived in a rather melodious vein and the quaint trio to the third movement "allegro molto moderato e comodo," this latter adding to the general gloom and heaviness of the work, which a brightly vivacious scherzo might have done much to relieve. A fine performance and complete mastery of the enormous difficulties presented especially by the first and last movements and altogether out of proportion to the actual effect, was given by Madame Norman-Neruda and MM. L. Ries, L. Straus and Piatti, whose artistic labours justly met with a recall. The sonata, or so-called sonata (what say our sticklers for form to such an infraction of their cherished orthodoxy, and by an old master to boot?) in D major, Op. 5, No. 1, for violin with pianoforte accompaniment, by Corelli, a name dear to our amateur fiddlers, is reckoned the best of a set of twelve, the whole being played to perfection by Madame Norman-Neruda, endowed with the gift of infusing by her excellent phrasing and execution new life into this somewhat antiquated class of composition and recalled twice to the platform amidst general plaudits. Mdlle. Clotilde Kleeberg, the pianist, selected for performance the somewhat hackneyed Impromptu, Op. 90, No. 4, by Franz Schubert, succeeded by Stephen Heller's Waltz Op. 93, No. 2, lacking in great measure the charm of freshness and spontaneity of the earlier works of that excellent writer of pianoforte music, and altogether too flimsy a trifle for this occasion, followed by a still flimsier one by way of an inevitable "bonne bouche." The young and gifted artist should endeavour to avoid undue prominence of the left hand over the right disturbing the proper balance between the two, more especially in "forte" playing. The final instrumental piece in the programme was Mendelssohn's Pianoforte Trio in D minor, how often performed at these concerts we have been unable to ascertain, but still welcome to many, if only by way of a lesson how it should be played. Mdlle. C. Kleeberg, Madame Norman-Neruda and Signor Piatti, having been the excellent executants at this concert. The songs were entrusted to the hands or rather vocal powers of that rising young tenor, Mr. Henry Percy, and sung with fairly good voice and ex-

pression, but what could have induced the choice of anything so commonplace in point of melody, harmony and accompaniment as Bizet's "Love Song" without the least suggestion of Bizet, or French music in general, it is difficult to conceive. Somewhat better were the two lieder by A. Rubinstein: "The Dream" and "The Tear," the latter especially leading to an effective climax towards the end. The concert attracted a fairly numerous audience.

NOVELLO'S ORATORIO CONCERT.

A very brief notice will suffice for the third Novello Oratorio Concert given on Wednesday. The programme consisted of two of the productions of the late Leeds Festival, to expound the wonders of which appears to be one of the chief objects of these performances. Mr. Stanford's ode, *The Revenge*, has met with due appreciation in these columns. Its manly tone, its melodious swing, and its declamatory force, again produced their due effect upon the audience, and led to a loud call for the composer, who modestly refrained from conducting his own work. The performance under Mr. Mackenzie was very creditable, although the boldness and simultaneousness of attack and the splendid lung power of the Leeds Choir were of course looked for in vain. Very excellent, on the other hand, was the rendering of Mr. Mackenzie's *Story of Sayid*, which had evidently been prepared with the utmost care, and went without a hitch from beginning to end. Madame Albani and Mr. Barton McGuckin were in splendid voice, and sang magnificently, and Mr. Watkin Mills, in the part of the heavy father and tyrant, did at least full justice to the side of the character first named. Of the work itself we have previously expressed our opinion, which was in every sense confirmed by a second hearing. To those who look to Mr. Mackenzie for clever music skilfully put together, most admirably scored, and supplied with *colour locale* by dint of augmented seconds and other Eastern devices familiarized by Félicien David, Bizet, and Rubinstein, *The Story of Sayid* is likely to give full satisfaction; to others who believed, and are still hoping, that he might develop an individual style of his own, the same work will probably appear disappointing, in spite of the many clever and agreeable things which it no doubt contains, and which were fully appreciated by a numerous and sympathetic audience.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

At the Orchestral Concert of the Royal Academy of Music at St. James's Hall, last week, Beethoven's Mass in C formed the most important feature of the programme. The small chorus, in which the female voices greatly predominated, was not equal to so severe a task. The work, however, was played and sung through with commendable precision. Miss Lily Crabtree, Miss Hannah Jones, Mr. W. Humphreys, and Mr. Alec Marsh were the soloists. This was the first performance with Mr. Barnby as conductor, and the Royal Academy is to be congratulated on having secured the services of so admirable a musician. Already the effects of his influence are noticeable in the refinement of the chorus-singing. Miss Ethel Boyce played the Allegro from Beethoven's Concerto in G very well, introducing a cadenza of her own composition. Part of Mendelssohn's G minor Concerto was given, in which Miss Mabel Lyons took the solo part, and a fragment of a third—Beethoven's violin concerto—was made use of to display some clever violin playing by Miss Gates. This cutting up of classical masterpieces is not likely to engender reverence for the continuity and the design of works of art in the minds of the pupils.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC.

An orchestral concert of the students of the Royal College of Music was held at the West Theatre of the Albert Hall on December 2. The performance of Mendelssohn's *Melusine* Overture was, on the whole, excellent: some points for the wind alone were at times a little unsteady. In Beethoven's Concerto in G, Mr. Barton played the solo pianoforte with great brilliancy and mastery over the technical difficulties. This was especially remarkable in the cadenza of the first movement (by Mr. J. F. Barnett) and the Rondo. Miss A. Russell and Mr. Price sang the duet for soprano and baritone from *Elijah*. The declamatory music of the prophet showed Mr.

Price's fine voice to great advantage. Miss Russell, though singing in excellent style, lacked the power necessary to give full effect to her part. Mendelssohn's *Infelice* was given by Miss Julie Albu with considerable dramatic power. Schubert's Mass in F, No. 1, closed the concert. The prevailing character of the mass is simplicity, but in the "Gloria," especially at the "Cum Sancto," an elaborate and effective fugue shows the hand of the master. The "Agnus Dei" contains some charming points of melody. The performance of the students showed careful rehearsal, with encouraging results. The chorus has been trained by Mr. Eaton Faning. Mr. C. Villiers Stanford was the conductor.

THE HECKMANN QUARTET.

Since the first two concerts devoted to Haydn and Mozart respectively, this interesting cyclus of chamber music has offered a *menu* rich in material, and varied in character, with the same exceptional measure of artistic success as in the case of the above-named two recitals previously noticed. This is speaking volumes as to the versatility of the artists concerned, considering the wide span traversed from Haydn to Brahms and compeers of the present day. Beethoven's 1st period received suitable exemplification from the Serenade for string trio, Op. 8, more primitive in style than some of the great master's earlier works, and the Quartet in A, Op. 18, culminating in the Quartet in C, Op. 29, from its grandiose character more aptly belonging to the 2nd period. Franz Schubert was represented to the fullest possible advantage by his String Quartets in A and D minor, separated by the Pianoforte Trio in B flat, the pianoforte part being entrusted to Mr. M. G. Pradeau, whilst the Mendelssohn selection: Quartet in B flat, Op. 12, Variations for Pianoforte and Violoncello (with Herr Carl Weber at the piano), and Quartet in E minor, Op. 42, illustrated the genius and perfect mastery of form peculiar to the composer from his early youth, the exquisite rendering having imparted a sense of novelty to these familiar works. The Schumann *matinée* comprised the master's three String Quartets, Op. 41, his only contribution to this form of chamber music, works especially affected by the Heckmann Quartet, and hence interpreted in a manner not easily to be forgotten. Brahms, as the foremost composer of absolute music of the second degree, enjoyed likewise the privilege of a whole evening to himself, including his String Quartets in C minor, Op. 51, and B flat, Op. 67, besides the Violin Sonata in G, Op. 78. The last concert for present notice introduced a String Quartet in B flat by Carl Goldmark, which it would be difficult to match for dearth of musical invention and want of general interest, notwithstanding the *col legno* and other tricks of combination of sound, and showing certainly no title to that notoriety apparently secured by his operatic effusions in the Austrian capital and elsewhere. The choice made by the Heckmann Quartet in this instance is, in view of such a vast field of excellence for selection, altogether unaccountable. The Englishman had in the succeeding piece an easy victory over the Hungarian, Mr. Hubert H. Parry's Pianoforte Trio in E minor possessing at least a fine flow of melody, although not of a very high order except in the adagio, rising to genuine warmth of expression; some rhythmic force as, e.g., in the opening theme of the finale was likewise conspicuous, but unfortunately no less so an undue search after originality, leading to eccentricity to the obvious detriment of some portions of the work. Laid out well for the three instruments, it was played with the requisite rigour and expression by Miss Amy Hare, MM. Heckmann and Bellman. This young lady should be cautioned to restrain her enthusiasm from undue outward demonstrativeness neither graceful nor pleasant to behold. The third, and by far the best work contained in the programme, was Johann S. Svendsen's String Quartet in A minor, imbued with that Northern colour characteristic of most Scandinavian composers, and very charming when not indulged in too often; the second movement of the quartet, andantino, being especially melodious and graceful, succeeded by a scherzo, replete with spirit and humour, although occasionally bordering on the grotesque, the final allegro assai of stirring effect both in its dashing first and lovely second subject bringing both quartet and concert to a happy conclusion.

Some remarks on the remaining four concerts are reserved for our next.

THE BACH CHOIR.

The first concert of the Bach Choir given at Princes' Hall on Monday, must be looked upon as an earnest of future things rather than as a test of what this excellent society under its able conductor, Mr. C. Villiers Stanford, is capable of doing. The programme of the three concerts announced for the season is, indeed, a very ambitious one, including as it does not only the first performance in England of a selection from Schumann's opera *Genoveva*, but also Berlioz's *Te Deum*, dedicated to the late Prince Consort, and to be performed in honour of the jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. For the present, however, the Bach Choir is acting upon the principal *chi va piano va sano*, and in Monday night's concert an orchestra and solo vocalists were altogether dispensed with. We do not wish to imply that the performance thus derived of its most popular attractions, and in consequence not very largely attended, was in any sense devoid of interest. It on the contrary placed the *raison d'être* of private societies of this kind in a striking light. Orchestral and choral concerts are so expensive, public taste is so entirely confined to a few well-known works by famous composers that institutions carried on for the sake of immediate gain can afford to venture upon fresh woods and pastures new at long intervals only. And the forgotten masters' ancient days are even more unfavourably placed in this respect than contemporary musicians who come before the London public with the laurels of a provincial festival green upon their brow. Who for example—except perhaps Mr. Henry Leslie in a corner of a miscellaneous programme—would think of advocating the claims of Anerio and Michael Praetorius, an Italian and a German composer of the 16th century, or of John Christian Bach, a cousin of the immortal John Sebastian? The first of these, the successor of Palestrina in the Papal Chapel, represented the earlier and severer forms of Italian art by means of a "Christus surrexit," which proved among other things that counterpoint is by no means incompatible with poetic inspiration and declamatory effect. Michael Praetorius contributed his version of a very old *Kirchenlied*, which like many tunes adapted subsequently to church uses may originally have been a lovesong, so suave and graceful is the melody. The motet for two choirs, "Gracious Lord God," by John Christian Bach, was interesting chiefly on account of its being an authentic specimen of its composer, whose best work was for a long time attributed to his famous namesake. It is a scholarly piece of music, but its value is antiquarian rather than intrinsic. The great English madrigal and part-song writers, from Dowland and Orlando Gibbons down to Wesley, had, of course, their accustomed place in the programme. But perhaps the finest specimen of our national school was T. A. Walmisley's madrigal, "Sweete flowers," in the words and music of which the characteristics of the old style had been reproduced with singular felicity. The performance throughout showed signs of earnest study and rare intelligence on the part of singers and conductor. Mr. Stanford is the right man in the right place, and under his leadership the Bach Choir is likely to do even more excellent work in the future. The voices if not very sonorous are well balanced; only the tenors appeared occasionally a little coarse. If in the matter of attack and dynamic *nuance* Monday night's performance could not be compared with the best work of Henry Leslie's choir, it should be remembered that that institution is the growth of more than a quarter of a century while Mr. Stanford is almost new to his office. For phrasing and enunciation of the words we are inclined to uphold the Bach Choir against all competitors. The concert in addition to other virtues had that of being short. In the intervals of the vocal music Miss Lucy Stone played Handel's violin Sonata in A in a highly creditable manner, and three pieces by Orlando Gibbons, Byrd, and John Bull, originally written for the virginal, were played upon the pianoforte by Mr. Fuller Maitland, an accomplished amateur, with an accuracy of detail and neatness of touch of which no professional pianist need have been ashamed. Although not difficult, according to the standard of modern *technique*, these pieces require judgment and taste for their perfect rendering.—*The Times*.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS.

The Royal Society of Musicians departed from their usual custom of performing *The Messiah*, and gave instead a musical festival in Westminster Abbey, on Friday, December 10. The pro-

ceedings were opened with a portion of the evening service, intoned by the Rev. Flood Jones, the precentor. Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* followed. The choruses were sung by the choir of the Abbey reinforced by a number of ladies and gentlemen. Madame Valleria was absent through indisposition, and Miss Annie Marriott took her place. Miss Ambler and Mr. Harper Kearton were the other soloists. The second part of the festival consisted of the soprano solo from *The Redemption*, "From Thy love as a Father," sung by Miss Marriott; Dr. Bridge's setting of The Hymn of St. Francis of Assisi; and last, by Luther's Hymn, in which the congregation joined. Dean Bradley pronounced the Blessing, and the large congregation dispersed. It is to be hoped that the collection made between the two parts has resulted in a large sum for the benefit of the widows and orphans and aged poor musicians. Last year upwards of £3,400 was collected.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

At the Crystal Palace concert on Saturday last a good programme of well-known works was carried out in the excellent manner which has become a matter of course to the performers. Sir Arthur Sullivan conducted in the place of Mr. Manns, the concert opening with his overture to the "Sapphire Necklace." Mdlle. Kleeberg thoroughly satisfied the audience by the performance in her most finished style of Beethoven's fourth pianoforte concerto in G major, one of his most characteristic creations; the cadences she employed at the conclusion of the first and last movements were by Madame Schumann. Later in the programme Mdlle. Kleeberg played Tchaikowski's "Chant Sans Paroles" and Mendelssohn's "Andante and Presto-agitato" with the same brilliancy and artistic feeling, earning for herself the hearty applause of her listeners. Beethoven's symphony in B flat was splendidly played by the band, the other purely orchestral item being excerpts from the incidental music written by Sir A. Sullivan in 1874 to the "Merry Wives of Windsor." These consisted of a prelude and sprightly dances of fairies, the finale giving a genuine old-fashioned English festivity spirit to the composition, which is throughout stamped with a fresh originality. A song was introduced between the pieces of which the words, commencing "Love laid his sleepless head," were written by Mr. Swinburne. The vocalist, Miss Agnes Janson, gave a pleasing rendering of this graceful song; her other selections were a song, "Eventide," by Mr. T. Matthay, with an orchestral accompaniment, Massenet's "Le Crépuscule," with harp obbligato, and the "Habanera," from Bizet's "*Carmen*."

LONDON SYMPHONY CONCERT.

The fifth London Symphony Concert, given on Wednesday night, again exhibited the happy blending of various schools and various tastes which from the beginning has characterized Mr. Henschel's programmes. The most interesting novelty belonged to the English school, being a scena and prayer from the unperformed and unpublished opera *Wanda*, by Mr. Charles Thane, a composer known to fame chiefly by the cantata, *The last sigh of the Moor*, performed with marked success by the South London Choral Association some time ago. The present selection shows the hero of the opera, Rudolph, a young and powerful Bohemian noble, in a very trying situation. Not only does he love hopelessly and desperately Wanda, the daughter of John Ziska, the Hussite chief, but he is also imprisoned and condemned to die unless he should forswear his faith. In this perilous situation he seeks refuge in prayer to the Virgin, and that prayer forms what technically may be called the air. It is a piece of cantilena, flowing and broadly developed and containing that rarest gift in modern music, genuine melody. Less successful is the recitative, of course of the *obbligato* kind, which goes before, and which in its turn is preceded by an orchestral *exordium*. Mr. Iver McKay did ample justice to the piece, which might have been written for his agreeable, albeit, not very powerful, voice, and warm applause was the result. A new violin Concerto, by Gernsheim, does not call for detailed notice. It is a specimen of very able musicianship, lacking however that spontaneity of invention which has preserved two solitary specimens of this form by Beethoven and Mendelssohn from oblivion. Herr Ondricek played it with technical mastery, giving special prominence to the national touches which Gernsheim has introduced in

the last movement. The prelude to Max Bruch's opera, *Lorelei*, written to the same libretto which Mendelssohn left unfinished, also deserves mention. It is perhaps the best number in the entire opera, which has never been popular on the stage.

DR. VINCENT'S CONCERT.

On Thursday evening, December 9, at the Vestry Hall, Hampstead, a new oratorio, "Ruth," by Dr. Charles Vincent, was given for the first time in London. The performance was a most successful one in every way; the soloists and chorus of eighty voices evidently entering into their work with enthusiasm, and as a natural result their singing left nothing to be desired. Madame Henrietta Tomlinson as Ruth was most charming, her phrasing and voice being much admired. Miss Marianne Tomlinson as Naomi sang with considerable dramatic power. Mr. Maybrick as Boaz had a part that thoroughly suited him, and he sang it to perfection. The several duets and trios were much enjoyed. Mr. T. Grylls, who possesses a baritone voice of very good quality, received warm applause for his difficult solo as the judge. The second part contained a selection of vocal and instrumental music which was ably rendered by the artists above mentioned, with the addition of Madame Antoinette Sterling, Signor Luigi Meo, and Mr. S. Midgley. A new four-part song by Dr. Vincent, "Absent from thee," beautifully sung, brought a most successful concert to a close.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL CHORAL SOCIETY.

The excellent performances of Gounod's *The Redemption*, by the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, under Mr. Barnby, have now attained to the position of classical or standard rendering. Nowhere else is the singing of the chorus so steady and delicate, and nowhere else is the general effect of this work (far superior to *Mors et Vita*) so great. On Wednesday night the solo parts were taken by Madame Albani, Miss M. Fenna, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr. H. Piercy, Mr. Watkin Mills, and Mr. Santley.

HARROW MUSIC SCHOOL, SOUTH HAMPSTEAD BRANCH.

The Christmas Recital of the pupils of the Harrow Music School, South Hampstead Branch, took place at the Eyre Arms Assembly Rooms on Wednesday last, and attracted a large and fashionable audience. Special mention must be made of the pianoforte playing of Miss Oliver, Miss Wyon, and the Misses Florence and Ethel Stephens, the former of whom performed the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 53, with dash and spirit. A capital violin solo was contributed by Miss A. Burles, and some excellent singing by Miss Carrie Stephens. The choir sang some part songs, and assisted in giving Goring Thomas's Psalm, "Out of the deep," with good effect. The lady-principals divided the pianoforte part of Schumann's Quartet between them, each gaining considerable applause. The recital was a great success.

Next Week's Music.

TO-DAY (SATURDAY).		P.M.
Saturday Popular Concert.....	St. James's Hall	3
Saturday Concert	Crystal Palace	3
Heckmann Quartet Concert	Steinway Hall	3
Thimble League Concert	Princes' Hall	3
Mr. Sims Reeves's Concert	Albert Palace	8
London Conservatoire Concert	St. James's Hall	8
"La Grande Duchesse"	Her Majesty's Theatre, 2 and 8.15	
MONDAY, 20.		
Monday Popular Concert	St. James's Hall	8
Royal Hospital Concert	Princes' Hall	8
TUESDAY, 21.		
Opera de Salon, "The Two Poets"	St. George's Hall	8
WEDNESDAY, 22.		
London Symphony Concert ..	St. James's Hall	3
THURSDAY, 23.		
Messrs. Hann's Second Chamber Concert...	Gresham Hall, Brixton	8

Music Publishers' Weekly List.

SONGS.

Four Songs for Tenor, second set	Whewall Bowling Stanley Lucas
Lessons for Bass or Baritone, Concone's Forty	A. Randegger ... Novello
Lessons for Contralto, Concone's Forty	" " " "
Lessons for the Medium part of the Voice, Concone's Fifty	" " " "
Wail from the Ocean, The	W. B. Chinner ... Ashdown

DUET.

For you I've waited (Soprano and Tenor)	W. B. Chinner ... Ashdown
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PIANOFORTE PIECES.

Agnus Dei from the First Mass (Mozart)	Edwin M. Lott ... Ashdown
Bride's Farewell, The	J. Pridham ... "
Cataract, The	Seymour Smith ... "
Danse Napolitaine (S. Smith)	Carl Kruger ... "
Gardes du Roi, Les	Michael Watson ... "
Improptus, Two	H. M. Brickdale-Corbett ... Schott
Marche des Pierrots	Colin Bergeval ... Ashdown
Papillons bleus	Edwin M. Lott ... "
Plasir d'amour	Colin Bergeval ... "
Slyphide, La	Michael Watson ... "
Zingara, La	" " " "

VIOLIN AND PIANO.

Gems of Bishop, No. 1	J. Pridham ... Ashdown
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PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

SATURDAY, Dec. 18.—10 a.m.: Service (Boyce) in A; Anthem, "Call to remembrance," No. 11 (Ps. xxv. 5), Nares. 3 p.m.: Service (Gladstone), in G; Anthem, "Rejoice in the Lord," No. 2 (Phil. iv. 4), Purcell.

SUNDAY, Dec. 19 (4th Sunday in Advent).—10 a.m.: Service Benedicite (Turle and Bridge), in A; Jub. and Contr. (Distin), in C; Anthem, "Sleepers wake," No. 319 (Chorale), Mendelssohn; as Introit, Hymn No. 57. 3 p.m.: Service (Cook), in G; Anthem, "Thus saith the Lord," &c., No. 199 (Hag. ii. 6), Handel; Hymn, after 3rd Collect, No. 154. 7 p.m. (see Special Programme.)

Notes and News.

LONDON.

We are requested to state that Mr. W. G. Cusins has removed to No. 40, Montagu-square, W.

A concert was given last week in the Mission Hall, Stoke-gardens, in aid of St. Laurence's Convalescent Home for Children. Haydn's Toy Symphony, and some instrumental and vocal solos and duets, in which Miss Alice Roselli, Miss Brooke-Hunt, Mr. William Sutton (violin), Signor Mhanes, and other artists took part, were listened to enthusiastically by a large and fashionable audience.

Mr. Frederick Cowen's Scandinavian Symphony was given in Leipsic at the Popular Concert on the 6th with great success. The *Tageblatt* speaks of it as "a very original work, and an important addition to symphonic literature." Mr. Cowen has returned from Bradford, where he conducted this and the "Language of Flowers," on Saturday night, and was presented with a wreath afterwards.

A beautifully illuminated address on vellum and a massive gold hunter watch were presented to Dr. Stainer, M.A., of St. Paul's Cathedral, on Tuesday evening, at the Cannon-street Hotel, by the members and committee of the London Male Voice Club (Männergesang-verein), on the occasion of his resignation of the post of conductor of the club which Dr. Stainer has held for the past thirteen years. The presentation was made by the hon. secretary of the club, Mr. H. Brandreth Gibbs, and between 300 and 400 members were present and afterwards took part in a smoking concert, when a capital selection of part songs was rendered, under the baton of Mr. Eaton Fanning.

The Trinity College Orchestral Concert was given at the College on Monday night. A band of about thirty-five instrumentalists, among which were several professionals, gave some well-known orchestral pieces, including Mozart's Jupiter Symphony, and Cherubini's *Anacreon* overture

with considerable spirit and in fairly good tune, but with some occasional unsteadiness of attack. An interesting feature was Mr. R. W. Lewis's pianoforte solo in the Serenade and Allegro by Mendelssohn, for pianoforte and orchestra. Mr. Lewis here showed considerable executive power. Three vocal pieces and soli on the violoncello and the pianoforte made up the programme, which, consisting mainly of Handel and Mendelssohn excerpts, was wanting in variety.

Dr. Bradford's fifth terminal organ recital was given at the Royal Naval School on last Tuesday evening. The programme included organ soli by Morandi, Dunster, Lemmens, Corelli, Bach, Bennett, and Lefebure Wely, besides an Extempore Voluntary and an Introduction "Judith" of Dr. Bradford's own composition. Miss Edith M. Coldwell at the piano, and Mr. James Terry as solo violinist, took part in the concerted music: the choirs of the Royal Naval School and St. Luke's, Charlton, contributed carols, anthems, etc. Mr. Gaskin was the solo vocalist.

The first concert of the fourth year of the Stock Exchange Orchestral Society was given at Prince's Hall on the 9th inst., under the direction of the society's conductor, Mr. George. Several pieces were given with various degrees of merit, the chief feature being Beethoven's second symphony and a pianoforte Concerto in E flat by the late Mr. S. W. Waley, himself an amateur of no mean order. The concert thoroughly pleased a large and distinguished audience.

The fifth season of the Strolling Players' Amateur Orchestral Society was inaugurated on Thursday last by a most successful concert held at St. James's Hall. Inasmuch as a large and important society like this courts public criticism, it is satisfactory to note that a decided improvement was manifest in the orchestra, both as regards executive ability and attention to light and shade, excepting some of the brass instruments. When it is taken into consideration that the works performed were, overture "Zauberflöte," Symphony No. 1, Kalliwoda, ballet music from Delibes's "Coppelia," and the prelude to fifth act of "Manfred," by Reinecke, it will be understood that the instrumentalists had set themselves no easy task to perform. Vocal items were contributed by Miss Anna Williams and Madame Marian McKenzie, to the evident satisfaction of the large audience present. The band was under the direction of Mr. Norfolk Megone, the accompanist and organist being Mr. A. J. Caldicott. A special feature of the programme was the pianoforte playing of Miss Florence Waud in Mendelssohn's G minor concerto, and Chopin's Ballade in A flat.

The Committee of the Hatcham Park Musical Society have arranged to give their first concert on Monday, 20th inst., under the direction of their conductor, Mr. F. A. Jewson, when the net proceeds will be handed over to the vicar and churchwardens of All Saints, Hatcham, in aid of the fund for providing Christmas dinners for the poor.

It is reported that Mr. Carl Rosa intends to form his English Opera Company into a limited liability company.

The Secretary of the Royal Academy of Music announces that the competition for the newly-founded Liszt Scholarship will take place in April, the last day for receiving candidates' names being March 21. This Scholarship will be open for competition by male and female candidates, natives of any country, between fourteen and twenty years of age, and will be awarded to the one who may be judged to evince the greatest merit in pianoforte playing or in composition. All candidates must pass an examination in general education before entering the musical contest. The holder will be entitled to three years' free instruction in the Academy, and after that to a yearly sum for continental study.

The Burlington violin and orchestral academy for the higher development of violin playing, solo, chamber, and orchestral music, possesses some distinct features in its method of imparting tuition. Special classes are being formed for ladies, when pupils will have the opportunity of playing violin soli with orchestral accompaniments. There are also classes for string quartet, quintet, pianoforte duos, trios and orchestra, where students will have the advantage of co-operating with professional artists. Singing, choral practice, harmony and composition are by no means overlooked, much care and attention being bestowed on these branches of the art. On the occasion of our visit to 23, Savile Row, last Tuesday, the orchestra went through a severe course of training, under the able direction of the principal, Herr J. Kornfeld.

With a view to the convenience of students residing in remote places, the authorities of Trinity College, London, have decided to institute correspondence classes in the various subjects of the matriculation and further arts examinations preliminary to the higher musical diplomas of the College, under the superintendence of the director of the Literature and Science Department, Mr. G. W. Bloxam, M.A., who will be happy to answer any enquiries addressed to him by persons wishing to avail themselves of the new regulation.

AN ACCIDENT ON THE STAGE.—On Saturday afternoon the visitors to Her Majesty's Theatre, where the French company was performing *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein*, were witnesses of an accident which,

for a moment, was very alarming. This occurred to Madame Mary Albert, in the third act. In the third act a raised road is represented above the camp, and the chief actors are at breakfast when the Grand Duchess has to make her entrance down this raised road. As the pages who preceded the Duchess passed over the roadway the spectators could see that some of the boards quivered under their slight weight, and no sooner did the Grand Duchess step on than they tilted up, and she disappeared from view with a scream of fright. The actors on the scene below ran to the assistance of the lady, and the whole scene was one of confusion on the stage; but the audience, which was not large, sat calm. The curtain was dropped, and the representative of Le Baron Puck came forward with the information that the lady was not hurt, and that the performance would proceed. When the curtain rose the piece proceeded from the point where it was thus suddenly broken off, and when the Duchess came on, before she could say the opening words of her part, "Messieurs, je vous salue," warm applause greeted her from all parts of the house, and there was evident sympathy with the lady in her apparent lameness, the result of the accident.

A concert was given yesterday afternoon in the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole, by Mr. Clement Hoey, in aid of Miss Blake's Assisted Emigration Fund. A large and fashionable company, including the Duchess of Albany, assembled. A good programme was provided, and the performance of it left nothing to be desired. Madame de Fonblanque, Mr. Gilbert Campbell, Mdlle. Agnes Janson, Mr. Charles Chille, Miss Helen d'Alton, Mrs. Alfred Caldicott, Mrs. Godfrey Pearse, Mr. Herve d'Egville, and Mr. Clement Hoey, were the vocalists. M. Eugene Wagner, in the twofold capacity of composer and performer, played, amongst other pieces, a "Barcarolle" for the pianoforte, which has been dedicated to the Duchess of Albany, to whom M. Wagner, who had given music lessons to the late Duke of Albany, was afterwards introduced.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH.—The members of the Philharmonic Society assembled on Monday evening last to hear the annual lecture of their conductor and musical director, Mr. Albert Visetti. The subject "the early musical instruction of children," was ably treated in a manner both instructive and interesting. At the conclusion of the lecture a short concert was given by members of the society, assisted by Messrs. Reakes and Houghton, and as solo-pianist, Mr. Visetti. The entire entertainment was much appreciated by a large assembly. The same evening Miss Amy Hare, described on the ticket of admission as "the celebrated pianiste," gave a pianoforte recital to a small though attentive audience. On Tuesday, the Quartet Society (Leader, Herr Ludwig), gave the first concert of their present season.

BIRMINGHAM, Dec. 13.—Her Majesty's Italian Opera Company, under the sole direction of Colonel J. H. Mapleson, have just concluded their operatic representations of six performances at the Prince of Wales's Theatre. The original repertoire for Birmingham was to have included the operas of *Faust*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Traviata*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Mignon* and *La Sonnambula*. These, however, were changed for the following:—*Faust*, *Lohengrin*, *Il Trovatore*, *Carmen*, *Martha*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Unfortunately our prognostication last week proved to be but too true. The Birmingham public failed to support the best and in every respect the most efficient Italian Opera Company ever heard in the provinces. The wretched attendance on the first three nights must have been very discouraging to the most sanguine entrepreneur. Although the attendance improved with every performance, yet the houses were not half full; and we can only express our regret that better support has not been forthcoming. The performance of all the operas left nothing to be desired. Under Signor Vianesi, the band and chorus did their duty well. A wonderful stride has been made in this respect compared with Italian operas of former years. The chorus displayed a remarkable freshness and power. Though numerically not large, the effect they produced by their ensemble was satisfactory. The orchestra, which was greatly augmented, played with judgment and refinement. In our brief notice we cannot give a detailed account of the various performances, but we may conscientiously state that we have never listened to more meritorious renderings of the respective operas than those given by Colonel Mapleson's Italian Opera Company. The principals are so well known that it hardly needs mentioning them individually. The *soprani* comprised Mdlles. Lilian Nordica, Louisa Dotti, Marie Engle; *mezzo-soprani*: Madame Lablache and Mdlle. Bauermeister; *contralto*: Mdlle. Helene Hastreiter; *tenori*: Signori Runcio and Vicini; *bassioni e bassi*: Signori Del Puente, Padilla, Rinaldini, Ciampi, Del Vaschetti, Vetta, and Foli. Mdlle. Nordica as Carmen and as Susannah in *Le Nozze di Figaro* created a great impression by her versatile acting and expressive singing. Mdlle. Marie Engle (a young American cantatrice) made her debut here in *Martha*, and also played the part of Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. It would require the pen of a Borne or Heine to do justice to her grace and charms. She fairly captivated her audience by her beautiful acting and singing. The finest impersonation of Azucena ever given on our local boards was that of Mdlle. Helene Hastreiter. Her

magnificent contralto voice is not only full and sonorous, but it also captivates and charms the listener. The audience was perfectly carried away by her acting. Madame Lablache appeared as Nancy in *Martha*, and as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Years have dealt most kindly with her. Signor Vicini, who played Manrico, is a conscientious actor, gifted with a remarkably telling tenor voice (quite Italian). He, however did not please the public so much as Maurice as he did in *Martha*, when he impersonated Lionello. He sang Flotow's delightful and melodious music like an artist and won golden laurels for himself. Signor Padilla (whose likeness to the late Signor Mario is most striking) proved himself to be every inch an actor of great talent. His Conte di Luna and his Figaro are both parts in which he excels. He was immensely applauded in everything he did. Signor del Puente fully sustained his great reputation as the finest baritone on the Italian stage. He has not lost in power nor in vigour since last we heard him, which is many years ago.—The Birmingham Festival Choral Society's performance of Randegger's *Fridolin* and Anderton's choral poem, *Norman Baron*, was, artistically speaking, most successful. *Fridolin* is taken from Schiller's ballad, "Der Gang nach dem Eisenhammer," and has been dramatized by the late talented Madame Rudersdorff. The work was written for the Birmingham Festival of 1873 and was then well received. It is full of dramatic force, splendid orchestration, and a most interesting work to listen to. Last Thursday's performance was splendid. The choruses were given with remarkable precision and power, the orchestra, under Mr. Stockley, played the music quite *con amore*, and greatly contributed towards the well-deserved success of the cantata. Mr. Barton McGuckin took the part of *Fridolin*, Madame Georgina Burns, the Countess, Mr. Watkin Mills was responsible for Hubert, and Mr. Grice sang the music allotted to the Count. The artists sang their best and were loudly applauded by the small but appreciative audience. We regret space will not permit us to detail the various merits and the splendid rendering of the work, and we must conclude by stating that the cantata all round could not have been given better. Mr. A. R. Saul was an able organist, and discharged his duties artistically. Mr. Anderton's choral poem, the *Norman Baron*, written for full orchestra and chorus, is an interesting work, and merited the applause bestowed on it.

BRIGHTON, December 15.—Mr. Corder's new Cantata, *The Bridal of Triermain* was performed on Thursday evening at the Dome, by the Brighton and Hove Choral and Orchestral Society, the composer conducting. The solo parts were taken by Miss Alice Barth, Miss Emily Dones, Mr. Henry Grey, and Mr. Arthur Oswald. Loud and prolonged cheering indicated that the impression made by the performance was a very favourable one. Colonel Mapleson's Italian Opera Company have given performances of *Faust* and *Lohengrin*. *Carmen*, *Martha*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Il Trovatore*, are promised. It is ten years since Italian opera has been heard in Brighton, and the season has begun successfully.

GLASGOW.—The first of the Saturday evening Popular Concerts, given under the direction of the Glasgow Choral Union, took place on December 11. The audience was large, and appeared to have enjoyed the programme placed before them by the enthusiasm which they accorded to Mr. Mann's and his staff of performers. The programme comprised Auber's "Exhibition" overture; Saint Saëns's "Symphonic Poem;" Wagner's "Vorspiel to Parsifal;" Beethoven's "Symphony in C, No. 1;" and Delibes's Suite de Ballet, "Sylvia." The chief part of the programme was the performance of Paganini's "Concerto for violin and orchestra;" and Ernst's "Fantasia on Hungarian Airs," which were admirably rendered by Pan Franz Ondriek, and in reply to a hearty encore for the last-mentioned, he gave Raff's well-known Cavatina with great taste.

SHEFFIELD.—The Carl Rosa Company performed *Ruy Blas* with much success at Sheffield on Friday last week, and Madame Marie Roze, as Donna Maria, won great praise for her acting and singing.

FOREIGN.

BERLIN.—Weber will be celebrated at the Royal Opera House by a performance of *Preciosa*. *Der Freischütz* will be given by the members of the opera company at the Royal Theatre, where this opera was first heard in 1821. The idea of reviving *Oberon* with Wüllner's recitatives has been abandoned.—The Bloch Operatic Association gave for the first time recently, Naubert's Cantata, *Barbarossa's Erwachen*, a pleasing and effective, but by no means an important work, and Schubert's *Alfonso and Estrella*, which has been given several times on the stage without great success, in spite of the beauty of some of the lyrical numbers. At a recent Philharmonic concert a symphonic work in five movements by Raff, entitled *An das Vaterland*, was played. It was composed about twenty-six years ago, inspired by the events of that period, and it is not likely to become popular now.—M. de Pachmann has given a recital here; his playing was enthusiastically admired by a large audience, who demanded and obtained three encore pieces. M. de Pachmann's technique and expression are highly praised by the critics, who however discover that he fails in power in his rendering of Beethoven and Schumann.

LEIPSIK.—The programme of last week's Gewandhaus concert was extremely interesting: "Frühlingsouvertüre," Hermann Goetz: Spohr's violin Concerto in D minor, Bach's Prelude and Fugue from the 1st violin Sonata, played by Herr Brodsky: "Pur dicesti" (Lotti) and some Weber Lieder sung by Frau Schimon-Regan, and a novelty, Max Bruch's new symphony (No. 3 in E major). This new work, which was well received by the public, is constructed according to the prescribed forms and has 4 movements: 1, Andante; 2, Adagio; 3, Scherzo and Trio; 4, Allegretto. The introductory Andante which is partly built up on the 2nd theme of the 1st movement (a suave melody for horns), is followed by the Allegro, a movement very satisfactory from all points of view, themes, development, orchestration, everything in short, showing the master's hand. The Adagio, a kind of Chorale, which is treated on its second appearance with passing notes, &c., has an agitated middle portion. The whole is tolerably sombre in character and contrasts vividly with the Scherzo and its almost "Schumannesque" trio. The themes and treatment of the former portion of the 3rd movement are very humorous; but one step farther and the same would be common. The Allegretto forms a fitting close on account of its brilliancy and leaves the impression that Max Bruch's new work, is, on the whole, no mean addition to the already bulky list of symphonies. Herman Goetz's "Frühlingsouvertüre," although interesting in some respects, is not one of the most favourable examples of the talented composer's genius. It was well played by the orchestra. Frau Schimon-Regan, and Herr Brodsky were both very successful in their solos and were much applauded.—Mierzwinski's concert was a great success financially. It is a question whether one does not become tired of hearing a man sing five or six valueless selections (for the greater part) with two encores per selection. The singer has, without doubt, a phenomenal voice but nothing else, not a trace of artistic feeling, nothing but an endless striving after effect. The pianist, Mélite Wienzkowska, although a very passable player, did not fulfil the high expectations of all. Her technique is good but her tone is hard and unsympathetic. — At the Extra Gewandhaus concert held last Sunday morning, Arthur Friedheim played Chopin's piano Sonata in B minor, Wagner's "Tannhäuser" overture and the "Norma" Fantaisie (both arranged by Liszt). Frä. Hermine Spiess was the vocalist.—At the next Gewandhaus concert Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" is to be given. —The operas performed were: "Tristan and Isolde" (Wagner), "Armida" (Gluck), "Otto der Schütz" (Nessler), &c.

PARIS, DEC. 15.—The full dress public rehearsal of Paladilhe's *Patrie*, fixed for Tuesday night at the Grand Opera, has been indefinitely postponed owing to the indisposition of M. Lassalle, and of his understudy, M. Melchissédec. The profits of this preliminary representation are to be devoted to the relief of the sufferers from the inundations in the South of France, and as much as £4 has been demanded and eagerly paid for each stall and for each place in a box by a fashionable public, bent upon assisting at an important *première*, and very generous in their sympathy with the charitable object.—The first performance of *Lohengrin* at the Eden Theatre has been definitely fixed for April 18, 1887. A successful trial has been made at the Grand Opera of a metronomic contrivance, in which an electric current conveys the beat from a machine at the conductor's desk to a corresponding machine in sight of the chorus-singers behind the scenes. Carpentier is the inventor, but the idea of a double metronome was suggested by Berlioz long ago.

ST. PETERSBURG.—Naprawnik's *Harold* was produced at the Marie Theatre on Nov. 23. The subject of the opera is the conquest of England by the Normans. The work contains some excellent numbers, but is long-winded and monotonous in parts. Mme. Pavlovski as Adela, the daughter of William the Conqueror, sang very finely, especially in the mad scene of the last act. A cradle song here interpolated is one of the most beautiful numbers of the opera. Mme. Slavine as Guita, Harold's mother; Stravinski as William, and Wassiliew as Harold, were good. The choruses and concerted pieces were on the whole very successful. Eugene D'Albert, Essipoff, Madame Norman Neruda, and Signorina Barbi are expected here shortly.

VIENNA.—The second performance of Goldmark's *Mertin*, with judicious cuts, confirmed its first success.—Gounod's *Tribut de Zamora* has been revived, with Lucca in the part of Hermosa. Amongst the almost countless mass of concerts with which this great emporium of musical art has been inundated of late as usual at this season (including a series of no less than thirty Kretschmann orchestral concerts), special interest was attached to sundry more or less important novelties, including besides A. C. Mackenzie's violin Concerto, new to Vienna, and splendidly played by Herr Rosé, an orchestral capriccio, op. 66, by A. Dvorak, in B flat minor, which, although hardly one of that prolific—too prolific—composer's bestworks, is instinct with passion and generally effective, and met with a favourable reception at the Philharmonic conducted by Hans Richter. *Apropos* of A. Dvorak, lovers of pianoforte duets should direct their attention to a set of new "Slavische Tänze," Op. 72, excelling in sparkling originality and *esprit*, even the older set of "Slavische Tänze," Op. 46, which laid the foundation of A. Dvorak's since rapidly extended fame. Valuable addi-

tions to the *repertoire* of chamber music have been contributed by Johannes Brahms's second violoncello Sonata, characterized by great boldness, intensity of pathos and stormy passion, happily contrasted by a new violin Sonata in A major, full of tranquil and melodious beauty, and certain to command speedy and general acceptance, especially if played in the manner of its recent first performance by that great artist, Joseph Hellmesberger, senr., in conjunction with the composer himself; that of the aforesaid violoncello Sonata, with the latter again at the piano, and Robert Hausmann at the 'cello having been scarcely less successful. Amongst the crowd of executants catering for public distinction, the young English pianist, Eugène D'Albert, created a perfect sensation by his marvellous execution of Brahms's enormously difficult concerto in B flat, as well as his own recital of pianoforte music. The violinist, Teresina Tua, also known to London, met likewise with much favour, notwithstanding the still lively recollections of Ondricek's late performances of Beethoven's Concerto and Romance, placing this young artist in the very front rank of living violinists. A débutante, Mdle. Hermine Spiess, pupil of the great Stockhausen, has taken Vienna by storm by her singing altogether *hors ligne*, of lieder by Fr. Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, etc., with a rare combination of fine poetic feeling and high artistic culture, wedded to the exquisite freshness of naturalness and the possession of a sympathetic contralto voice, hence the rare artistic effect. *Impresari*, if there be any, who still believe a London audience sufficiently remunerative for displays of high musical art, should look after Mdle. Hermine Spiess without delay.

DEATHS.—At Schaerbeck, Louis Jorez, professor of singing, a native of Brussels, aged 59.—At Darmstadt, Louis Schlösser, violinist, composer, musical critic and writer, aged 86.

Samara's *Flora Mirabilis* is to be given soon at the Cologne Opera.

Mr. Goring Thomas's *Esmeralda* has been revived at the Cologne Theatre.

It has been proposed by Herr Nicolas Esterlein to open a museum at Weimar, devoted to memorials, portraits, autographs, etc., of Liszt, on the model of the Mozarteum, at Prague.

Brambach's prize cantata, *Columbus*, written for the last Milwaukee Festival, was performed for the first time in Germany by the Bonn Male Chorus Association, with considerable success.

Anton Bruckner's 7th Symphony was well received at Amsterdam, where it was performed under De Lange's direction.

Richard Pohl, the musical historian and critic, is engaged upon a novel, in which he expresses his opinion on burning musical questions with greater freedom than is admissible in critical notices.

An F major symphony in MS. by Ludwig Thuille has been produced at a subscription concert in Munich, under the direction of the composer. The symphony is said to contain many beautiful thoughts, and is written with skill.

Max Bruch's *Achilleus* was very successfully performed by the Zurich "Mixed Chorus," conducted by Herr Hegar.

The revival of the fashion of giving Acts of grand opera in full costumes and stage settings in concerts at present adopted by Madame Adelina Patti, is originally due to Madame Minnie Hauk, who inaugurated it four seasons ago by giving scenes from *Carmen*, *Mignon*, *Faust*, and other operas supported by her own company. The venture proved to be very successful financially, and Madame Hauk is at present again giving the same operatic concerts in the principal cities of America.

VALUABLE AUTOGRAPH SALE IN BERLIN.

A very valuable sale of autographs has come beneath the hammer in Berlin, and some high prices were paid. The highest figures were paid for autographs of Richard Wagner. An essay by Wagner on Meyerbeer, only recently brought to light, in which high praise of the composer of "The Huguenots" is expressed, sold for 640 marks, and another composition by Wagner brought 960 marks. A letter from Wagner to Heinrich Laube (Paris, March 13, 1841) was sold for 91 marks, one to Meyerbeer for 71 marks, and another to the director of the Prague Conservatorium for 116 marks. A fragment of the diary kept by Wagner in Paris containing a poem sold for 115 marks. Of musical manuscripts, two of Chopin's Polonaises went for 400 marks. A letter of Beethoven, dated Vienna, September 29, 1816, sold for 200 marks, and one of Joseph Haydn, dated Esteras, October 10, 1785, for 225 marks, while Robert Schumann's MS. of "Four marches for the pianoforte" brought 190 marks. An interesting collection of twenty-four letters written by the philosopher, A. Schopenhauer, and dated July 16, 1855—August 18, 1860, sold for 500 marks. A letter from Schiller (Dresden, February 13, 1786) to the bookseller Göschen sold for 115 marks. An autograph of J. S. Bach sold for 936 marks, and one of Mozart (aria for soprano, "Conservati fidele," with accompaniment for two violins, viola, and bass. 1765, composed by Mozart at nine years) for 119 marks; another musical autograph of the same composer fetching 200 marks. A letter of Voltaire sold for 64 marks, and the MS. of a composition by Cherubini for 85 marks.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.



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